



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2020

No. 25

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 6, 2020.

I hereby appoint the Honorable HENRY CUELLAR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2020, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING SURVIVORS OF GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the survivors of gun violence.

Last month, I had the opportunity to meet with Jules Oringel of Charlotte when she led the Pledge of Allegiance at my State of the District address. She is a local high school senior, and her story is a story that no young woman should ever have to tell.

She was at home in her room, on her phone, like any teenager, and then she gets a message from one of her best friends. She says there is an active shooter in her school and she doesn't know what is going on. She tells everyone in the group chat she loves us.

The best friend is at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Eventually, Jules learns that one of the people she had attended camp with lost her life in the shooting.

Jules says, for the next few weeks, she was riddled with anxiety at school, at other public spaces; she couldn't sleep, and she did not know how her friends would heal.

That is something no young woman should ever go through.

That is not okay with me.

In the aftermath, Jules stepped up to start the nonprofit Return Home Supplies, because every student and every teacher deserves to return home.

It is hard for me to believe that we have reached a point in our country where people have legitimate concerns about making it home at the end of the day. As a 40-year educator, I cannot imagine how students balance those concerns with every other challenge that they face.

And that is not okay with me.

Last year, the city of Charlotte saw the worst violence that we have seen in decades. Tragically, we concluded 2019 with 107 murders, the highest in decades. Our community lost a disproportionate number of African American men whose lives matter, too. The towns of the 12th Congressional District lost people to gun violence as well.

And that is not okay with me.

107 murders, total—the vast majority involving guns. Charlotte families lost siblings and parents and loved ones and community members, congregants, students, and children to gun violence. Our community has been torn apart.

That is not okay with me.

Our very own UNC Charlotte, our 49ers, lost two souls who called our community home. Four other students were gravely injured, and our community was shaken to its core. And many of us are still in disbelief.

A school shooting happened in Charlotte. In a hallowed place that is supposed to prepare our youth for their future, two futures ended.

It was the first mass shooting that we have had at a school in Charlotte, and it should also be the last.

That is not okay with me.

Many Holy Books tell us that whoever destroys a single life is considered by Scripture to have destroyed the whole world, and whoever saves a single life is considered by Scripture to have saved the whole world. Each time we lose someone, we lose an entire world, an entire universe of hopes, dreams, and aspirations; we lose a thread that binds together families and communities.

Well, as a Charlotte community, as a nation, we must do something to stop the gun violence that tears at the fabric of our communities.

In this Congress, the first three bills the House sent to the Senate took weapons of war off the street and would make our communities safer. Now that the Senate has concluded its impeachment trial, they have no excuse to continue to hold these bills up other than they just don't care.

And that is not okay with me.

My colleagues and I have led the efforts to introduce key pieces of legislation that would close the loophole in our background checks, extend the background check process, prohibit those convicted of hate crimes from purchasing firearms, and reinstate the Federal ban on assault weapons.

I would like to take a moment to applaud the Charlotte City Council for

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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